175 721 to Bello and complained that violence was being used for political aggrandizement, not religious conversion. Bello replied that the attacks were justified because of the oppression of the Fulani in Bornu, and the heathen practices of the Kanuri people, and because of aid given by Bornu to Kano and Katsina to resist the holy war.

Between 1809 and 1811 the capital fell again to the Fulani and was retaken a second time by Laminu for the Kanuri, but it was abandoned from this time forward as the center of the Bornu state. The results 175 178 727 643 of these few years were cataclysmic for the history of Bornu. The Fulani invasion was halted, although the western vassals were now under the sovereignty of the Fulani Empire of Sokoto. Bornu had survived the Jihad (holy war), but at the cost of her famous capital of Birni Gazargamo, and the loss of a dynasty of rulers, the Magumi Sefuwa, who had retained the monarchy for 1000 years. For in appealing to Laminu for help, the Kanuri Mai triggered off the beginning of his and his family's end as the effective monarchs of Bornu, meanwhile initiating the beginning of the Kanembu dynasty which sits on the Bornu throne today.

175 643 [103] [361] The traditional Mai set up a new capital, called Kafela (open place) near the present town of Monguno, and Laminu resided for a while at nearby Ngorno on the shores of Chad. However the constant threat of inundation from the Lake forced him to move his headquarters further inland to [721] Kuka which became the 19th century center of the Bornu state. Ruling from behind the scenes, with the Mai still on the throne as a puppet, Laminu tried to re-consolidate the kingdom from 1820-35, by recapturing the western vassals, and even at one point (1826) by menacing Kano. It was during this period that Denham and Clapperton visited Bornu and in their publications we have a good record of the contemporary court life and politics of the kingdom, as well as some glimpses into the nature of everyday life in

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With minor disturbances, including one by the brother of Shehu Umar, in 1854, the Bornu kingdom maintained itself in a fairly stable condition, throughout the reign of Umar, and even afterwards during the reign of his son Bukr (1880-4). However, trouble was soon to come from the east.

In the Bahr el Ghasal and Darfur region of the present independent Sudan, an adventurer named Rabeh was slave raiding under the power of the first Egyptian governor of the Bahr, named Zubeyr,(1) in the 70's and early 80's. However Zubeyr's son Stiman headed a rebellion against Egyptian authority and was defeated, and his army disbanded. A remnant of this force headed westward under Rabeh who transformed this band of freebooters and pillagers into a disciplined army which, in the late 80's under the banners of the Mahdi, terrorized the Bahr el Ghasal, conquered Wadai, and defeated the Baghirmi kingdom east of Chad. In 1893, he engaged the Bornu army near Ngala and vanquished it. Whereupon he entered a defeated Bornu and literally raped the countryside. From 1893-6, he despoiled the entire area, putting to death many of the leading figures in Bornu who opposed him, and tried to spread his conquest as far west as possible. In this latter effort he was checked by a union of western forces and refugee Kanuri at the present site of Geidam in northwest Bornu. After 1896 from his capital at Dikwa, Rabeh seems to have attempted a consolidation of the kingdom and due to these efforts at administration a more moderate policy was followed. Nevertheless, his rule is remembered in Bornu today as the blackest period of their history. Old men are still alive who tell of the pillaging, burning, slave-raiding, killing and excessive extortion of the peasants, that was carried on during the "Rabeh period."

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(1) c.f. Balfour-Paul, H.G. History and Antiquities of Darfur; Sudan Antiquities Service, Museum Pamphlet #3 Khartoum, 1955.

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436 is to say, even those peasants marketing in the capital had not accepted the use of currency in 1850. Nevertheless some levels of the society must have been using the gursu (M.T. dollars) for some time, since Denham remarks that strips of cloth used for currency could be purchased in Bornu for forty to the M.T. dollar in the 1820's.(1) The market scenes observed by both Barth and earlier by Denham in the 19th century differ only slightly from those observed anywhere in Bornu today.

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721 As far as can be inferred from available sources, warfare and slave raiding made the life of the common people one of uneasy tension. Being the serf of one chief might not prevent a nearby potentate from sending out a raiding party which might easily clear out an entire local area of its inhabitants. The criterion which directed slave raiding only upon pagans was often honoured in the breach, especially if a chief's debts were [701] pressing. Again local life was often broken up by the feudal service in war which peasants owed to their chiefs. We are told in the history of Bornu of armies of thousands and campaigns which were waged annually year [182] after year for generations. In discussing this point, Denham felt that warfare resulted in a very mobile society where fortunes rose and fell rapidly and life as an intrinsic value was not highly regarded.(2) People in towns and villages, he says, are often mercilessly attacked and plundered. Accounts tell how the inhabitants, in attempting to fly, were
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727 caught by their attackers, whereupon, in most instances, the men were killed and the women and children lashed together and taken as slaves. Military men and their followers often died in droves on campaigns, widowing all their wives and concubines at one blow.

In response to this constant warfare, villages in danger would

(1) Denham, D. and Clapperton; op. cit. p. 54
(2) Ibid; p. 135

173 701 cause its soldiers were peasant subjects and rural followers of fief holders, whose homes were not in the capital but out in the Bornu countryside. In the pre-19th century military system, each of the four regional military leaders (the Yuroma, Mustrema, Kaigama, and Yerima) had under him a force of Kachellas, each of which in turn headed up a regiment of foot-soldiers and cavalry.

175 727 Very often a diplomatic Bornu ruler, after having defeated his enemy in battle would assess the situation and try to decide whether or not the chief of the opposing side (if Muslim) was worth keeping. If not he was executed. But very often the rebel or enemy leader was humbled, then raised up after a defeat and encouraged to become a loyal vassal of the King of Bornu.

175 643 703 726 It is also interesting to note that at least part of the morale of Shehu Laminu's army resided in the general belief in his supernatural powers as a military leader. The night before the battle witnessed by Denham it was reported that Laminu had written charms (verses from the Koran) and his enemies' spears and arrows were blunted and found so in the morning by their owners on the day of battle. Laminu was extremely anxious that Denham set off a rocket for him on the night before the battle, presumably for the same reason.

War itself was highly organized. The maintenance of the state required elaborate rituals and ceremonies to dramatize militarism, and the belief in the supernatural power of the leader or his religious associates helped maintain the morale of the army, which was also goaded on by a comprehensive system of sharing in the plunder. However, this tended to create for the average citizen an areal mobility not usually associated 175 721 with peasant life in Africa. A man might return from the wars to his village on the borders of the state to find no village, nor wife, nor home,